

# SWOSU Receives \$500,000 Endowed Scholarship

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Southwestern Oklahoma State University President Randy Beutler holds the \$500,000 check that the university recently received to establish the Rule of Law Education Endowment Fund with the SWOSU Foundation. The endowment was the result of a class action suit and the fund will provide scholarships for SWOSU students. Making the presentation were attorneys (left) Terry L. Stowers and (right) Douglas E. Burns. With Beutler is Lynne Thurman, assistant to the president for institutional advancement at SWOSU.

Southwestern Oklahoma State University in Weatherford has received a permanent endowment fund of \$500,000.

The Rule of Law Education Endowment Fund has been established with the SWOSU Foundation to promote leadership, citizenship and education of deserving SWOSU students.

The Rule of Law Education Fund was created by order of the Honorable Gerald H. Riffe, associate district judge for the District Court of Beaver County, as part of a class action *cy pres* distribution for the purpose of advancing the Rule of Law in Oklahoma through the promotion of leadership, citizenship and education of youth. The Rule of Law Education Fund was made possible through the joint efforts of attorneys Douglas E. Burns and Terry L. Stowers of Burns & Stowers, P.C., Allan DeVore of the DeVore Law Firm, and R. Jamie Kee of Trippet, Kee, Trippet & Parsons, as well as the class representative, Lobo Exploration Company.

"SWOSU is appreciative of this generous gift that was made possible by Judge Riffe, Doug, Terry, Allan and Jamie," SWOSU President Randy Beutler said. "The greatest result of the creation of this fund will be manifested in the students who are able to draw from it and enhance their lives and the future of western Oklahoma."

According to Judge Riffe, the cornerstone of our society is the "Rule of Law". The Rule of Law is a legal-political regime that guarantees government accountability and protection of rights of individuals through equal access to a transparent and independent judicial system. The judicial system has numerous safeguards and procedural devices to ensure this equal access and protection.

One of the devices is the class action. In 1976, U.S. Supreme Court Justice William Douglas, the longest serving justice in U.S. history, said, "In our society that is growing in complexity there are bound to be innumerable people who would go begging for justice without the class action. The class action is one of the few legal remedies the small claimant has against those who command the status quo. I would strengthen his hand with the view of creating a system of law that dispenses justice to the lowly as well as to those liberally endowed with power and wealth."

SWOSU was one of several universities in Oklahoma to be named beneficiaries of the class action suit.

Students selected for the scholarships must be full-time students in good standing and must perform satisfactory work toward an undergraduate degree. The students must be citizens of Oklahoma, and scholarships will be awarded based on academic merit and need.

For additional information, contact Lynne Thurman, assistant to the president for institutional advancement at SWOSU, at 580.774.3267 or [lynne.thurman@swosu.edu](mailto:lynne.thurman@swosu.edu).